

**California Department of Conservation
Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program**

2004 FIELD REPORT

COUNTY: Riverside (West)

FIELD MAPPER(S): Michael Kisko

IMAGERY:

source: Air Photo USA
date: March 2004
scale: 2 foot resolution
film type: natural color
coverage gaps: none
additional imagery: none

WRITTEN, DIGITAL & ORAL INFORMATION SOURCES: *Please list which local governments, interest groups, or individuals submitted comments on the 2002 maps. Also list all phone and in-person contacts made or related GIS data referenced while conducting the 2004 update.*

➤ *local review comments*

cities: Corona, Murrieta
county:
others:

➤ *personal contacts:* John Brennan with Agri-Empire

➤ *websites:*

Agri-Empire: <http://www.agri-empire.com/home.htm>

➤ *GIS data referenced:*

SWIS landfill/waste facility reference file

2002-2004 CHANGES*: *Please summarize the most common changes to the maps. List representative locations (quads) of each type of change encountered. Make sure to list and describe particularly large, unusual or notable changes and give estimates of the acreage involved.*

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Urban Land:** 38 changes

Conversion from irrigated farmland to urban land was primarily due to the construction of new single-family homes. The most notable of these conversions took place to the north of Norco, in southern Corona, in western Riverside, to the north and east of Lake Mathews, and in Hemet.

First, multiple additions of new homes (~370 acres), including the “Homecoming” development, were made in an area to the north of Norco and to the west of I-15. In southern Corona, two additions of new homes (~60 acres) were added. In western Riverside, one addition of new homes accounted for the conversion of approximately 90 acres of irrigated farmland. Meanwhile, to the north and east of Lake Mathews, the “Lake Hills” (~100 acres) and “Bridle Creek” (~85 acres) new home developments were added. Finally, the largest conversion of irrigated farmland to urban land this update occurred in Hemet with the new “Four Seasons” golf course community (~400 acres).

There were also some significant conversions of irrigated farmland to industrial buildings, this update. These were seen mainly in the form of warehouses in the Mira Loma, Riverside, and Perris and Moreno Valley areas.

In the Mira Loma area, a new warehouse and adjacent parking was added (~40 acres). Multiple warehouses including the Car Quest and Plascor warehouse (~30 acres) along with a facility for Bourns College of Engineering (~15 acres) were added in eastern Riverside. Lastly, the new “Ross Dress for Less” warehouse (~80 acres) and another large, new warehouse (~45 acres) were added in the Perris and Moreno Valley areas, respectively.

➤ **Local, Grazing or Other Land to Urban Land:** 180 changes

The conversion of local, grazing or other land to urban land was a very large category of change this update. Again, these conversions were due, primarily, to the construction of new single-family homes and industrial buildings, to a lesser extent. Notable changes include:

Riverside/Mira Loma/Glen Avon

New homes were in evidence in eastern Riverside where approximately 75 acres were added. In Mira Loma, new urbanization was seen in the “Arabella Ranch” home development (~100 acres). Also in Mira Loma, paved areas were added at the Union Pacific automobile distribution center (~75 acres). Finally, a new school was added in Glen Avon (~50 acres).

Corona/Norco/Lake Mathews

In Corona, new homes (~100 acres) were added to the south in the vicinity of the “Chase Ranch” and “Crown Ranch” developments. Also in Corona, the “Crossings at Corona” shopping center was added along with a Slater Bros. Grocery store and shopping center across the highway (~100 acres).

Meanwhile, two additions of new home developments to the north of Norco accounted for the urbanization of approximately 175 acres. East of Lake Mathews in the Woodcrest area, a large, new area of homes was added (~160 acres). To the south, nearby the Gavilan Plateau, new homes were the cause of approximately 120 acres of urbanization.

Lastly, to the south of Corona in the Temescal Valley area, the El Sobrante Landfill was expanded (~70 acres).

Perris and Moreno Valley areas and Sun City

Industrial uses were represented in the Moreno Valley near March Air Reserve Base where two, new warehouses (~40 acres) were added, one being the “Henry/Wild Oats Distribution Center.” Further to the east and to the south of March ARB, two additions of new homes were made, totaling approximately 160 acres. South of the City of Moreno a further addition of new homes was made where a golf course community was seemingly built-out (~70 acres). Nearby, across from the Perris Reservoir, a lot of new development activity was noted. New homes were seen in the “Village of Avalon,” “Meadows,” “Bayside,” and “Waterford” developments (~300 acres). The new “Sierra Vista Elementary” and “Lakeside Middle School” (~40 acres) were added nearby.

Meanwhile, multiple additions of new homes were seen in and around the Sun City area, totaling approximately 400 acres. Two additions of new homes (~270 acres) were also made to the south of Sun City, in the Paloma Valley area, where the “Mapleton” development was added.

Lake Elsinore/Murrieta/French Valley/Temecula

New urbanization was seen to the northwest of Lake Elsinore where approximately 130 acres of new homes were added. To the east of Lake Elsinore, in the Sedco Hills area, a large addition of new homes and a school accounted for the conversion of approximately 120 acres.

Meanwhile, new homes (~100 acres) were seen in Murrieta nearby I-15. More new homes (~180 acres) and the new “Vista Murrieta High School” (~65 acres) were added in Murrieta. In the Murrieta Hot Springs area, the “Mira Mesa” and “Northstar” developments, along with a new school, were large additions this update (~160 acres). In the French Valley area, two additions of new homes accounted for the urbanization of approximately 330 acres. To the west of Skinner Reservoir, two additions of new homes were also in evidence (~200 acres). Further, three additions of new homes totaling approximately 300 acres were added in the Skunk Hollow area.

Finally, four additions of new homes in northern and eastern Temecula accounted for the urbanization of approximately 340 acres. A couple of additions of new homes and buildings (~80 acres) were also made in the southern Temecula area, nearby Wolf Valley.

San Jacinto Valley

Only two conversions of note, a new Lowe’s store (~15 acres) and an addition of new homes and a school (~75 acres) were made, both nearby the Hemet-Ryan airport.

Beaumont/Banning/Cabazon

The new “Sundance” home development (~200 acres) was the biggest instance of urbanization in Beaumont. However, industrial uses were also seen in Beaumont as a new Lowe’s flatbed distribution center, new industrial buildings, and a paved go-kart facility (~100 acres) were also added. In Banning, the build-out of homes at a golf course community caused the urbanization of approximately 80 acres. Finally, in Cabazon, the new Morongo Casino, Resort and Spa 23-story hotel tower, associated low-rise structure, cogeneration plant, and parking was added (~50 acres).

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Local or Grazing Land:** 84 changes

The conversion of irrigated farmland to local or grazing land was primarily due to plots of farmland that had been fallow for three or more update cycles. The majority of these plots were small and they were scattered throughout the agricultural areas of the county. However, there were some large conversions out of irrigated farmland. For example, an area of former orchards to the southwest of Lake Mathews had been fallow for three updates and was taken out of irrigated farmland, causing the conversion of approximately 700 acres of land. Another large conversion out of irrigated farmland occurred to the east of Riverside nearby the Box Springs Mountains (~450 acres). In the Terwilliger Valley, another sizeable conversion of irrigated farmland occurred (~300 acres).

Near Diamond Valley Lake, two more plots of irrigated farmland that had been fallow were converted (~170 acres). A plot of fallow farmland was also taken out on the southern fringe of Corona (~100 acres). A further conversion of fallow irrigated farmland occurred to the south of Glen Valley (~115 acres). Lastly, a conversion of approximately 120 acres occurred off Long Valley Road in the Temecula area.

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Other Land:** 21 changes

These conversions were small and scattered throughout the county. They were primarily due to the identification of ranchettes and buildings associated with farmsteads such as residences and agricultural storage buildings. Improved delineation of agricultural boundaries, especially at the periphery, also contributed to some of the conversion.

➤ **Local, Grazing or Other Land to Irrigated Farmland:** 51 changes

The additions of irrigated farmland made this update consisted primarily of potatoes, alfalfa, and orchards, along with the expansion of various nurseries around the county. The most significant addition of irrigated farmland was not necessarily due to the planting of new fields but was due to comments by the Agri-Empire company who helped us increase the accuracy of our mapping in the Anza Valley. Anza Valley had previously been mapped as a patchwork of nonirrigated crops and irrigated crops. Agri-Empire submitted comments showing us the extent of their irrigated potato cropland, thus increasing the amount of irrigated farmland in the valley by approximately 1,000 acres. The next significant addition of irrigated farmland occurred in the San Jacinto Valley where approximately 600 acres of irrigated farmland, likely alfalfa and silage crops, was added around the dairies in the area. Finally, multiple, small additions were made to existing orchards in the Santa Rosa Plateau area, to the west of Murrieta and Temecula.

➤ **UNUSUAL:** *Category changes, complications with the Farmland of Local Importance definition, or any other special circumstances in 2004.*

Local to Other Land: These changes were due to the identification of ranchettes throughout the county.

Irrigated Farmland and Urban Land to Nurseries: Small additions of nurseries were made throughout the county, a couple had previously been mapped as urban land. Also, nurseries were identified on irrigated farmland. This can potentially cause a shift of Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance to Unique Farmland.

PROBLEM AREAS: *What locations and map categories need careful checking in 2006?*

Why?

There may be more dry farmed areas that need to be identified, especially in the valley areas from the Perris Valley in the north to the Paloma, Domenigoni, and French Valleys to the south.

LABOR ESTIMATE: *Please estimate the amount of time spent on the following tasks.*

photo interpretation, start date: February 8, 2005

photo interpretation, number of days: 15

ground truthing dates: March 14-18, 2005

days for map compilation and clean up: 17

* **Note:** **Irrigated Farmland** = Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Unique Farmland; **Local** = Farmland of Local Importance

Further information on the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program can be found at:

www.consrv.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp

**California Department of Conservation
Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program**

2004 FIELD REPORT

COUNTY: Riverside (East)

FIELD MAPPER(S): Kerri Kisko

IMAGERY:

source: Air Photo USA ; NASA

date: March 2004 ; July 28, 2004

scale: 2 foot resolution ; 1 : 130,000

film type: natural color; CIR transparencies

coverage gaps: small area east of the Salton Sea

additional imagery: Digital Orthoquads (DOQs) of various dates for reference

WRITTEN, DIGITAL & ORAL INFORMATION SOURCES: *Please list which local governments, interest groups, or individuals submitted comments on the 2002 maps. Also list all phone and in-person contacts made or related GIS data referenced while conducting the 2004 update.*

➤ *local review comments*

cities: none

county: none

others: Palo Verde Irrigation District

➤ *personal contacts:* none

➤ *websites:*

Blythe Landfill Aerial Photo: www.rivcowm.org/Sites/blythe_aerial_photo.htm

Empire Polo Club: www.empirepoloevents.com

Horse Show Facilities: www.exhibitorfriendly.com

Kent Sea Tech: www.kentseatech.com

Welcome to Riverside County: www.co.riverside.ca.us

Yahoo Yellow Pages: <http://yp.yahoo.com>

➤ *GIS data referenced:*

SWIS landfill/waste facility reference file: SWIS.dgn

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➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Urban Land**

This update there were 18 conversions of irrigated farmland to urban land. The majority of these conversions were in the form of new housing developments in the Coachella Valley cities of Coachella and Indio. In Coachella, some of the new housing includes Placita de la Paz (~45 acres), La Moraga (~20 acres), and other homes (~30 acres). The Vineyards Luxury Motor Coach Country Club golf course (~70 acres) was also added in Coachella.

In Indio, the Las Brisas North (~60 acres), Generations (~20 acres), and Waring Palms (~20 acres) housing communities were added. The approximately 100-acre Shadow Hills Golf Club golf course was also added and the polo arena at The Empire Polo Club (~15 acres) was noted.

Other changes in the eastern half of the county include some new homes in La Quinta (~15 acres), the Oasis Gardens Trailer Park (~20 acres) near Mecca, and the Casa Encinas (~10 acres) housing development in Blythe.

➤ **Local, Grazing or Other Land to Urban Land**

In the eastern half of the county there was a substantial amount of local, grazing, or other land (115 changes) converted to urban land. The majority of these changes were relatively small (10-25 acres) and consisted of homes and buildings. Most of the conversions took place in the Coachella Valley.

Housing developments in the northern Coachella Valley include Mountain Gate (~40 acres) in Palm Springs; Montage (~80 acres) and Rio Vista (~30 acres) in Cathedral City; Versailles (~45 acres) and Tuscany (~55 acres) in Rancho Mirage; Capri (~25) in Palm Desert; and additional homes (~170 acres) in Sun City Palm Desert. In the southern Coachella Valley new housing communities include Esplanade (~45 acres) in Bermuda Dunes; Cachanetta (~10 acres) and Cedar Springs Apartments (~10 acres) in Coachella; Bella Vista (~55 acres), Las Brisas (~30 acres), Shadow Hills (~30 acres), and Villa Montago (~70 acres) in Indio; Silverhawk (~25 acres) in La Quinta; and approximately 190 acres of homes in Mortmar that were added due to increased housing density. In the Palo Verde Valley the only significant new housing development is River Homes (~25 acres) in the City of Blythe.

Three golf course communities were added in the Coachella Valley. The Motorcoach Country Club (~35 acres) was added in Indio. In La Quinta, the Mountain View Country Club is approximately 310 acres and the Trilogy at La Quinta community is approximately 275 acres.

Other conversions include schools, businesses, landfills, and a power plant. New schools include the Rio Vista Elementary School (~10 acres) in Cathedral City, the San Bernardino State University Palm Desert Campus (~10 acres) in Palm Desert, and the Toro Middle School and Desert Mirage High School (~50 acres combined) in Thermal. The new businesses include the Thousand Palms Business Park (~10 acres) in Thousand Palms, the Country Club Village shopping center (~20 acres) in Rancho Mirage, the Desert Business Park (~10 acres) in Palm Desert, and the Arco gas station and large parking lot (~10 acres) in Mecca. The Edom Hill Landfill near Cathedral City was expanded by approximately 35 acres and the new Mecca II Landfill (~30 acres) was added near Mecca. A new power plant owned by Blythe Energy LLC (~40 acres) was added in Blythe.

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Local or Grazing Land**

There were 73 conversions of prime, statewide, or unique farmland to farmland of local importance or grazing land this update. All of these changes were due to irrigated farmland being fallow for three or more update cycles. These changes primarily occurred in the southern Coachella Valley and the Palo Verde Valley. The majority of the changes were relatively small (30 acres or less). Large conversions of 50 acres or more occurred on the Indio (2), Oasis (1), Valerie (1), Blythe NE (2), and McCoy Wash (6) quads.

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Other Land**

This update there were 24 conversions of irrigated farmland to other land. These changes were mainly due to the use of digital imagery to distinguish low-density housing (ranchettes) and farmsteads (main farm house with gravel area used for equipment storage) in areas that previously lacked imagery (southern Coachella Valley near Salton Sea and the Palo Verde Valley). These changes were relatively small, approximately 10-30 acres each. One change of note is an expansion of the Sunset Farms aquaculture facility (≈35 acres) in Desert Camp on the Mortmar quad.

➤ **Local or Grazing to Other Land**

There were 45 conversions of local or grazing land to other land this update. These changes primarily occurred in the southern Coachella Valley and the Palo Verde Valley and were largely due to the use of digital imagery to distinguish low-density housing (ranchettes) in the areas of the county that previously lacked imagery. The majority of these changes were fairly small in size (≈10-35 acres). New aquaculture facilities and expansions also led to numerous conversions. These changes were mostly small (≈10-25 acres). One change of note was an approximately 110-acre expansion of a fish farm near Mecca. Other changes were due to expanded horse facilities (3 changes) in Indio near the Empire Polo Club (≈30 acres each) and a mining facility (≈20 acres) near Mecca.

➤ **Local, Grazing or Other Land to Irrigated Farmland**

This update there were 51 conversions of local, grazing, or other land to irrigated farmland. These changes mainly occurred in the Coachella and Palo Verde valleys and primarily were in the form of date orchards, other orchards, field crops, or nurseries. The majority of the changes were relatively small (≈10-30 acres). The most notable changes include an approximately 105-acre parcel of row crops on the McCoy Wash quad, an approximately 50-acre parcel of row crops on the Mule Wash quad, and an approximately 40-acre citrus orchard on the Mecca quad.

➤ **UNUSUAL:** *Category changes, complications with the Farmland of Local Importance definition, or any other special circumstances in 2004.*

Urban Land to Other Land→ There were 8 conversions. On the Oasis quad, near the Salton Sea, three areas of urban were found to be aquaculture due to improved digital imagery. The Nichingsiang Fish Farm (≈55 acres), the Aqua Farming Technology fish farm (≈35 acres), and another area of aquaculture (≈20 acres) were changed to Other Land. Four of the changes were due to areas (≈15-35 acres each) that were over-mapped

and corrected due to improved digital imagery on the Myoma, Indio, Blythe, and Palo Verde quads. The last change was a redraw of the Blythe Landfill based on improved digital imagery.

Urban Land to Local or Grazing Land→ There were 5 conversions. All of these changes were due to areas that were over-mapped and corrected due to improved digital imagery. These conversions occurred on the Indio (≈10 acres), McCoy Wash (≈10 and 15 acres), and Ripley (≈15 and 40 acres) quads.

Urban Land to Irrigated Farmland→There were 4 conversions. An orchard (≈20 acres) was discovered on the La Quinta quad. On the Oasis quad, some irrigated row crops growing under low plastic tunnels (≈20 acres) were found. On the Blythe quad, an urban area was over-drawn and corrected due to improved digital imagery (≈15 acres). Also on the Blythe quad, a large area (≈120 acres) of urban was dismantled and the area was returned to irrigated farmland (we received a comment from the Palo Verde Irrigation District and the change was field verified).

Other Land to Local→ There was only one conversion. A dairy (≈15 acres) was discovered on the Blythe quad due to improved digital imagery.

PROBLEM AREAS: *What locations and map categories need careful checking in 2006? Why?*

In the Coachella Valley there are numerous areas of agriculture that are being grown under low plastic tunnels (the tunnels allow earlier planting of crops). These often look like nurseries or development in the aerial photos. Careful field checking may be needed.

LABOR ESTIMATE: *Please estimate the amount of time spent on the following tasks.*

photo interpretation, start date: February 7, 2005

photo interpretation, number of days: 8

ground truthing dates: March 14-18, 2005

days for map compilation and clean up: 10

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